

(Right) San Diego Chargers' Linebacker Mike Hamilton, Tackle Vaughn Parker, Safety Lloyd Lee and Long Snapper David Binn tour VP-47 at Barbers Point, escorted by VP-47's Lt. Dominic Caronello.

(Below) The Chargers' tour included a visit to the Arizona Memorial.



PH3 Keith Bryska photo



PH2 Chad McNeeley photo

San Diego Chargers visit Pearl Harbor

By J03 Brenda Diggs
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Four members of the San Diego Chargers from the National Football League visited various military installations on Oahu recently during a morale visit. When Vaughn Parker, Lloyd Lee, Mike Hamilton and David Binn spent time talking, eating with and learning from Sailors, Marines and Soldiers. The visit allowed the players to learn about different military branches and servicemembers got an opportunity to get autographs and photos from the players.

While visiting Pearl Harbor they toured USS Russell (DDG 59), USS Reuben James (FFG 57) and USS Frederick (LST 1184) and USS Buffalo (SSN 715). While on board, they experienced what everyday life is like for Sailors and learned about their countries war ships.

"It's amazing how there is so many guys living in such small spaces and are still be able to keep up their morale," said Parker, a tackle for the Chargers. "We were able to share with each other what we do. It was great to experience what the military does on a day to day basis and for them to see what we do on Sundays."

"We were really excited at getting a chance to have the San Diego Chargers visit our ship and take the time to sign autographs," said Yeoman 2nd Class LaBreta Lynn Jenkins, aboard USS Frederick (LST 1184). "I was also able to take a picture with Michael Hamilton."

During their visit to Marine Corps Base Hawaii Kaneohe Bay, the players witnessed a RAIDEX (a Marine training exercise). Marines from Marine Corps Base Hawaii performed a simulated combat situation with live ammunition and timed excursions.

"This morale visit shows how the players respect the military members and the players get to see how hard the military works for the money they make," said Sid "the



PH2 Chad McNeeley photo

MMCS (SS) Timothy Hibbs, USS Buffalo (SSN 715) chief of the boat, gives the visiting Chargers an idea of submarine life and ship capabilities.

Doc" Brooks, equipment manager for the San Diego Chargers.

The Chargers received a guided tour of Pearl Harbor aboard the Remembrance with a stop over at the Arizona Memorial.

"I really enjoyed the Arizona Memorial," said Mike Hamilton, a linebacker for the Chargers. "This visit helped me appreciate the military and the sacrifices people make for their careers."

The players visited Radford High School and talked with students from grades 9 - 12 about the importance of education and stressed the need for a college education. The players were greeted with satin leis made by Radford's student counsel. Hamilton told the students to always make the most of an opportunity when it is presented to them, while Lee explained how the long road to graduation will pay off.

"Getting an education is going to open more doors for you than anything else," Lee

told the students.

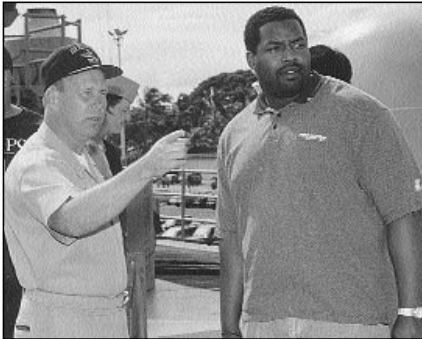
The players also visited patients at Tripler Army Medical Center and ate lunch with Soldiers.

"They (military members) got to see us as people and not just football players," said Binn, a long snapper for the Chargers.

"It is great that these Chargers are taking time out of their busy schedules to visit our hard-working Sailors and Marines in Hawaii," said Vice Adm. Mike Bowman, Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet in a March 13 press release. "This visit will be a fantastic morale boost for everyone."

"It was great to see all the different facets of the military," said Lee, a safety for the Chargers.

Ens. Sharon Boyd of USS Frederick also contributed to this article.



PH3 Keith Briska photo

(Above) Vaughn Parker gets a topside tour of a surface ship during their visit to Pearl Harbor.

(Right) Charger's Mike Hamilton signs autographs for USS Buffalo (SSN 715) Sailors.



PH2 Chad McNeeley photo